

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LOME 02849 01 OF 02 212210Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-07 AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /081 W
----- 085511 /73

R 211656Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1505
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 LOME 2849

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, US, XJ
SUBJECT: TOGOLESE SUGGESTIONS FOR U.S. RESPONSE TO SOVIET
ACTIVITY IN WEST AFRICA

1. WHAT TO DO ABOUT SOVIET ACTIVITY?

I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER EDEM KODJO ON DECEMBER 20 AND WE
HAD A RELAXED, WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION. AMONG THE TOPICS WAS
TOGO'S CONCERN ABOUT THE GROWING SOVIET PRESENCE IN AFRICA.
KODJO POSED THE QUESTION OF WHAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT'S
RESPONSE TO SUCH SOVIET ACTIVITY IN WEST AFRICA WOULD BE.
I SAID AS HE KNEW THIS WAS A TIME OF REFLECTION IN AMERICAN
POLICYMAKING AS THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WAS ENDING AND THE CARTER
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PAGE 02 LOME 02849 01 OF 02 212210Z

ADMINISTRATION WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN. HOWEVER, THE U.S. WAS KEENLY
AWARE THAT THE SOVIETS WERE MAKING INROADS IN VARIOUS
COUNTRIES AND THAT THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE THEY WERE PROVIDING
TO CERTAIN COUNTRIES APPEARED TO HAVE THE AIM OF CREATING DE-
STABILIZED AREAS. I ASKED KODJO HOW HE THOUGHT THE PROBLEM OF
SOVIET INTERVENTION MIGHT BE CONFRONTED.

2. AVOID MASSIVE POLITICAL INTERVENTION

HE SAID HE WAS WELL AWARE THAT THIS WAS A TIME OF TRANSITION IN AMERICAN THINKING ABOUT AFRICA. THEREFORE HE WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SOME OF HIS IDEAS IN THE HOPE THAT THEY MIGHT BE USEFUL TO THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AS IT REFINED THE ELEMENTS OF ITS EVOLVING AFRICAN POLICY. HE SAID, FIRST THAT THE U.S. SHOULD SEEK TO AVOID A MASSIVE POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN AFRICA A LA VIETNAM. KODO NOTED THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS A REFINED, SUBTLE AND NUANCED AMERICAN APPROACH TO MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUES AND SPECIFIC COUNTRY PROBLEMS. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT U.S. ALCE ATION FROM THE THIRD WORLD HAS BEEN DIMINISHED IN THE PAST YEAR; HOWEVER, SUSPICION REMAINED AND THE FACT WAS THAT THE U.S. HAD BEEN LABELED AS AN IMPERIALIST POWER AND IT WOULD TAKE A WHILE BEFORE THE NEGATIVE OVERTONES OF THIS LABELING WOULD DIMINISH. IN THAT PERIOD IT WOULD BE UNPROFITABLE FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES TO BECOME KNOWN AS AMERICAN STOOGES OR VALETS. KODO SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO OVER-STRESS THE FRENCH EXAMPLE BUT HE SAID THE FRENCH WERE QUITE SUCCESSFUL WITH MAKING POLITICAL "SUGGESTIONS" AND "ALLUSIONS" WITHOUT DIRECT AND POSSIBLY IRRITATING ATTEMPTS TO WIELD INFLUENCE.

3. U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT SHOULD BE INCREASED

KODO SAID THAT WHAT THE U.S. SHOULD DO WAS TO MAKE A MASSIVE ECONOMIC INTERVENTION IN AFRICA THROUGH TRADE AND INVESTMENT. HE SAID THAT AMERICAN BUSINESS SHOULD BECOME MUCH MORE INTERESTED IN AFRICAN ENTERPRISES AS JOINT VENTURE PARTNERS. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE SAID TOGO WAS ACTIVELY COURTING THE GIANT U.S.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LOME 02849 01 OF 02 212210Z

PHOSPHATE FIRM AGRICO SWIFT TO JOIN IN A VENTURE TO ESTABLISH A PHOSPHATE FERTILIZER PLANT AS AN INTEGRATED PART OF THE LOCAL PHOSPHATE MINING ACTIVITY. HE SUGGESTED THAT AFRICA SIMPLY COULD NOT OBTAIN INVESTMENT CAPITAL IN THE DIMENSIONS NEEDED FROM TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN SOURCES. ONLY THE U.S. HAD THE ECONOMIC MUSCLE TO INCREASE THE PACE OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT RAPIDLY.

4. INCREASE FLOWS OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL RESOURCES

THE TOGOLESE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE WAS WELCOME AND NEEDED. HE COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON U.S. POLICY OF SUPPORTING REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE ENTENTE FUND AND AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S. MIGHT FIND WAYS TO COOPERATE WITH THE WEST AFRICAN BANK FOR DEVELOPMENT. KODO PARTICULARLY EXPRESSED THE EARNEST HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD FIND WAYS TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ASPECTS OF ECOWAS THROUGH INVESTMENT IN THE ECOWAS DEVELOPMENT FUND OR OTHER

MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE GROWTH OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION.

5. AID PROJECTS DON'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT

WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT THE U.S. AID AGENCY WOULD DO WELL TO NOT SEEK PERFECTION IN PROJECTS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE REFINEMENT OF PROJECTS AND THE COMINGS AND GOINGS OF U.S. EXPERTS RESULTED IN LONG LEAD TIMES FOR ACTUAL TRANSFERS OF RESOURCES, OR, INDEED, SOMETIMES NO TRANSFERS AT ALL. IMPERFECT PROJECTS OR EVEN IMPERFECT PAPERWORK, HE NOTED, MAY WELL BE THE COST OF ACHIEVING MORE RAPID TRANSFERS OF RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY.(

6. AFRICAN VALUES AND WESTERN VALUES ARE COMPATIBLE

KODJO SAID THAT THE POINT IN WHAT HE WAS SUGGESTING WAS NOT ONLY THAT THE U.S. ALREADY HAD POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS TO PROTECT IN AFRICA, BUT QUITE CANDIDLY HE WAS

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LOME 02849 01 OF 02 212210Z

INTERESTED IN SEEKING GREATER U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA WHICH WOULD MEAN THAT U.S. INTERESTS WOULD GROW AND AS THEY DID THE U.S. WOULD FEEL MORE COMPELLED TO PROTECT THOSE INTERESTS IN WAYS THAT MIGHT BENEFIT AFRICA. THE WAY TO COMBAT THE SOVIETS IS NOT "TO DEBARK THE MARINES" BUT TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLOIT THE INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL FRAME OF REFERENCE WITHIN WHICH AFRICA LIVES. PROGRESSIVISM IS A FACT IN AFRICA NOW, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID. FOR BETTER OR WORSE AFRICANS SUPPORTED SOCIAL AND COMMUNITARIAN VALUES. AFRICAN SOCIALISM, HOWEVER, WAS ANTITHETICAL TO COMMUNISM. THE SPECIFIC TOGOLESE CONCEPTION IS THAT ENLIGHTENED LIBERAL CAPITALISM IS COMPATIBLE WITH INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITY AND THE CREATION OF COLLECTIVE WEALTH, INCLUDING AN INCREASED RATE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND A REDUCTION OF REGIONAL INCOME DISPARITIES. HOWEVER, THE POPULATION, PARTICULARLY THE STUDENTS WHO ARE IMPATIENT, MUST PERCEIVE TANGIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR LIVES AS EVIDENCE THAT THE SYSTEM IS WORKING. KODJO SAID IT IS IN THE U.S. INTEREST TO SUPPORT ATTEMPTS SUCH AS THAT OF TOGO TO DEVELOP OPEN AND PROGRESSIVE ECONOMIES IN WHICH CONCEPTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COULD BE NOURISHED. THE FACT THAT MANY AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS, INCLUDING TOGO'S WERE PRESENTLY AUTHORITARIAN WAS A REFLECTION OF THE PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL MOBILIZATION AND POLITICAL CONTROL RATHER THAN A PREDILECTION FOR TOTALITARIAN VALUES. IF AFRICAN STATES SUCCEED IN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT BASED BOTH ON LIBERAL CAPITALIST AND TRADITIONAL SOCIAL AND COMMUNITARIAN VALUES, AUTHORITARIANISM IS LIKELY TO DECREASE, WHICH WILL BE A VICTORY FOR CLASSICAL WESTERN HUMANISTIC VALUES. IF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT ON THIS MODEL DOES NOT SUCCEED, HOWEVER, THE RESULT IS LIKELY TO BE A RESORT TO STILL-UNPROVED MARXIST-LENINIST VALUES WITH THEIR DISTURBING TAINT OF SOVIET AUTOCRACY

AND TOTALITARIANISM. THE FOREIGN MINISTER OFFERED TO DEVELOP THIS THESIS FURTHER, BUT HE THOUGHT ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES WERE CLEAR.

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PAGE 01 LOME 02849 02 OF 02 212057Z
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 LOME 2849

7. U.S. SHOULD INCREASE CONTACTS WITH FRANCOPHNE AFRICA

KODJO NOTED THAT LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL REASONS HAD PROBABLY CAUSED THE U.S. TO PAY MOST ATTENTION TO ANGLOPHONE AFRICA; HOWEVER, THE TIME IS RIPE TO IMPROVE U.S. CONTACTS IN FRANCOPHNE AFRICA. HE COMMENTED THAT WITHIN THE FRANCOPHNE SYSTEM MANY SENIOR AFRICAN MINISTERS HAVE HAD LONG CONTACT WITH THEIR FRENCH GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS AND AS A CONSEQUENCE HAVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM AND RELATIVELY CONSTANT AND EASY ACCESS.

KODJO SAID THAT IN HIS OWN CASE HE AND FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING HAD BEEN MINISTERS OF FINANCE FOR SOME TIME AND HAD HAD MANY OCCASIONS TO MEET; THUS EVEN THOUGHT TOGO WAS A SMALL COUNTRY HE HAD EASY ACCESS TO GISCARD AND SENIOR LEVELS OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE U.S. HAD MANY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LOME 02849 02 OF 02 212057Z

INTERESTS IN THE WORLD BUT THAT HE AND OTHER FRANCOPHONE AFRICA LEADERS WOULD CLEARLY PROFIT FROM HAVING IMPROVED DIALOGUE WITH AND MUTUAL EASE OF ACCESS TO AMERICAN LEADERS PARALLEL TO THAT ENJOYED WITH FRENCH LEADERS. KODO SUGGESTED IN THIS CONNECTION CARTER ADMINISTRATION RE-ESTABLISH KENNEDY PRACTICE OF FAIRLY FREQUENT STATE VISITS TO U.S. BY AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE AND HEADS OF GOVERNMENT.

8. COMPLEMENTARITY OF EFFORT BETWEEN U.S. AND WEST EUROPE

IN SUMMING UP, KODO SAID HE RECOGNIZED THAT U.S. HAD TRADITIONALLY BEEN DEFERENTIAL TOWARD FORMER COLONIAL POWERS IN THEIR ZONES OF CONTINUING INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, SUCH INFLUENCE WAS UNDER ATTACK IN CONTEXT RISE OF SOVIET INFLUENCE. PACE OF EVENTS INCREASING SO RAPIDLY IN AFRICA GENERALLY AND WEST AFRICA SPECIFICALLY (BENIN, MALI AND GUINEA) THAT IT IMPERATIVE U.S. TAKE A GREATER INTEREST AND SOPHISTICATED ROLE IN AFRICA. HE SAID THIS COULD BE DONE IN MANNER THAT COULD BE COMPLEMENTARY (PARTICULARLY ON ECONOMIC SIDE) RATHER THAN COMPETITIVE WITH TRADITIONAL METRO-POLES. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT INCREASINGLY DEFT EXERCISE U.S. INFLUENCE ON AFRICAN EVENTS THROUGH GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF AND "NUANCED" REACTION TO WHAT HE CALLED AFRICAN PROGRESSIVISM WAS ESSENTIAL TO AVOID CONTINUED SHORING AWAY OF MUTUALLY SHARED VALUES AND HAPHAZARD REPLACEMENT BY SOVIET-INFLUENCED IDEAS AND METHODS REPUGNANT TO AFRICAN NATIONALISTS.

9. COMMENT: JODO IS A SMOOTH, TOUGH GRADUATE OF THE ELITE FRENCH ECOLE NORMAL D'ADMINISTRATION. WHILE HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH EX-NCO PRESIDENT EYADEMA INEVITABLY IS AFFECTED BY THE 38-YEAR OLD FOREIGN MINISTER'S PARISIAN MANNER, EYDEMA APPEARS TO RESPECT KODO'S ACKNOWLEDGED COMPETENCE AND HAS USED HIM TO GOOD EFFECT AS A POLITICAL ORGANIZER AND TECHNOCRAT. KODO IS COMMITTED TO MOST ELEMENTS OF THE THIRD WORLD IDEOLOGY, BUT LIKE MANY TOGOLESE, INCLUDING EYADEMA, HE HAS A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS. KODO HAS CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATED PRO-AMERICAN AND PRO-WESTERN ATTITUDES THROUGH THE YEARS

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LOME 02849 02 OF 02 212057Z

AND HIS VIEWS ON POSSIBLE U.S. RESPONSES TO THE THREAT OF SOVIET ACTIVITY IN AFRICA CARRIED THE RING OF CONVICTION AND SINCERITY. THEY ARE REPORTED IN DETAIL BECAUSE HE WAS CLEARLY TRYING TO BE AS HELPFUL TO AMERICAN POLICYMAKERS AT THIS TIME OF TRANSITION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, POLICIES, BALANCE OF POWER
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 DEC 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LOME02849
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760468-1174
From: LOME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761225/aaaaavgd.tel
Line Count: 275
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TOGOLESE SUGGESTIONS FOR U.S. RESPONSE TO SOVIET ACTIVITY IN WEST AFRICA
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, US, XJ, TO, XA, (KODJO, EDEM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006